Chained

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Summary

This is not how I expected my morning to start, he thinks as he grabs a Gatorade from his fridge. When he comes back, Will is very much on the verge of falling asleep. He sits on the couch and pulls him into his lap.

Hannibal takes care of a boy who passed out in his driveway, and now he won't leave. The thing is, he doesn't want him to.

Chapter 1

When Hannibal wakes up, after his morning cup of coffee, he always goes out to pick up the Sunday paper. Like clockwork, at 9:35, he walks to his mailbox, and he's a little shocked when his paper is not there. How odd. It's never late. Hannibal turns to head inside with a sigh. It's ridiculously hot outside and he wasn't about to wait in the heat. He pauses when he hears the sound of bike tires clicking. He turns to see a boy—he had to be no more than eighteen slowly pushing his bike up the steep hill that he and two others lived on. The boy makes it to his driveway, stops. He leans over his bike, but instead of bracing himself, he slumps, and Hannibal knows this boy's about to pass out.

Though he knows it will do no good, he shouts, "Hey, hey, hey!" as runs to catch him before he could fall with his bike.

Hannibal takes off the backpack he's wearing, shrugs it onto his shoulder, and carries him inside. He's drenched in sweat, skin flushed bright red. Hannibal's first priority is to get him cooled off.

"Pushed yourself too hard, didn't you?" he murmurs as he takes him up to the bathroom, where he strips him and gets him in the shower. He runs cold water over the boy.

Hannibal goes through his pockets and bag. He finds his school ID in his wallet. Will Graham. Digging through his bag, he finds medication: an antidepressant, meds for anxiety, and for seizures. All of which have bad reactions with heat. No wonder Will wasn't doing too well. He checks on Will. He still feels too hot, but he's cooling off. He's starting to wake—he's breathing and mumbling incoherently. Hannibal goes back to going through his bag, and what he finds are three newspapers.

This boy is the paperboy.

He also finds an empty water bottle, an empty bag of chips, and a bottle of aspirin underneath the papers.

"Cold…" he hears the boy mumble.

Hannibal reaches into the shower to check his temperature again. He sighs softly. "Just a little while longer, Will," he says gently. "You're overheated."

"But—"

"There is no need to argue with me, boy. You are in no position to do so."

Hannibal lets him sit a few minutes longer before he turns off the shower. He finds his biggest, fluffiest towel and gently wraps Will in it. There's little protest as he carries him downstairs and settles him on the couch. Will slumps against the arm. *This is not how I expected my morning to start* , he thinks as he grabs a Gatorade from his fridge. When he

comes back, Will is very much on the verge of falling asleep. He sits on the couch and pulls him into his lap.

“Ah, Ah, Ah. Stay with me, Will. Drink.” Will weakly shakes his head, tries to jerk it away from Hannibal’s reaching hand. He grabs his jaw. “You have no choice in the matter. Drink.” He pressed the open bottle to the boy’s chapped lips. Will reluctantly drinks. “Good boy, that’s it.”

Hannibal manages to make him drink almost half a bottle. It’s a good start, and he finally allows Will to fall asleep.

While Will sleeps, he brings down his comforter and a pillow. Afterwards, he tends to his Sunday cleaning. He decides to throw Will's sweaty clothes in with his laundry and brings his bag of belongings downstairs. He finds

an old flip phone in the front pocket. It hasn’t rang, vibrated, or any of the sorts from anyone. Odd. He thinks his parents would be worried about him by now. He makes the boy some lunch and sits it aside.

Hours go by. No call, no text. He goes to check on Will. He’s still sleeping, though the pillow and blanket he has given him are now on the floor, he’s sprawled out. It gives him the chance he study his impromptu guest.

Will is a gorgeous boy. Hannibal sits on the couch, lifts Will’s legs into his lap. He’s small for his age range, not quite malnourished, but definitely underfed. He sees his ribs. He gently pinches the skin under his collarbone. The skin takes a bit to return to its normal place. Will’s still dehydrated, but he could have been in worse shape. His hips are sharp and his legs make up most of his body. Short, dark curls have dried into a frizzy mop on his head. Given Will’s unhealthy state, Hannibal decides to roll him on his side, just to see if there are any signs of abuse. He finds nothing but a single, large handprint around the back of his neck. The bruise is too big to be a woman’s hand— maybe his father? Hannibal settles him back down, tucks the pillow underneath his head, and bundles him back up. He picks up the boom he’s been reading lately.

He gets ten pages in when Will begins to stir. He watches as he rolls onto his back. His eyes slowly open. Hannibal’s taken aback by just how beautiful and stunning his blue eyes are. He’s obviously confused. He doesn’t recognize his surroundings. He lets the boy come to his senses, speaking one he has sat up and made eye contact.

“How are you feeling, Will?” Hannibal asks.

“Like a massive bag of shit,” he says, rubbing his eyes. He blinks as he looks down at himself. He pulls the blanket tighter around himself. “Who are you, and where the fuck am I?”

Hannibal clicks his tongue. “Such a filthy mouth for a young boy,” Hannibal chides. “Dr. Hannibal Lecter. This is my home.”

“Where are my clothes? Why am I naked? Fucking creep—“

“Hush. Your clothes are in the dryer, and you are naked because you passed out in my driveway due to heat exhaustion. So I put you in a cold shower to lower your temperature, I made you drink Gatorade to replace some electrolytes, and then I allowed you to sleep on my couch for the majority of the day. If anything, a ‘thank you’ is in order, dear boy.”

Will looks at Hannibal, lowers his eyes as he drinks in what Hannibal says. Hannibal tilts his head curiously as he waits for an apology.

“I’m sorry I was rude. I—the last thing I remember is trudging up a hill with my bike. Thank you for taking care of me.”

Hannibal smiles. “Good boy. You’re very welcome. Now. I’ve got a simple lunch prepared for you to eat.”

“Thank you.”

Hannibal slips from underneath Will to fetch his lunch. The probably didn’t have breakfast, so he made the boy a yogurt parfait with granola and strawberries. He made a quick fried egg sandwich to give him added protein. Will sat up straight when Hannibal brought it to him. Will practically snatched the plate out of his hands, mumbling his apology between bites. Hannibal hands him his Gatorade. The boy acts like he never eats, the way he is downing the food. It’s such disgusting behavior, but he can look past it. For now.

“You mustn’t push yourself so hard, Will. You could have had a heatstroke, and you would have woken up in an emergency room instead of on my couch. Especially with your medication. They don’t fare well with the heat.”

Will looks down at his empty plate and cup. “I’m on my last strike. I just gotta pace myself better, is all…You’re the last house on my route.”

Hannibal tilts his head thoughtfully. “Hm..What are some things that you will eat, Will?”

Now it is Will’s turn to tilt his head curiously. He looks up at Hannibal, blue eyes shining bright, now that he feels better. “Why?”

“I have space in my fridge for a few things for you. I’ll invest in some sports drinks and snacks for you. I’ll leave my door unlocked for you on Sundays. You can simply come in, grab a drink from the fridge, as well as have something to eat, even if I am not here or I am asleep.”

Will blinks. “Oh, no, Dr. Lecter, you don’t have to do that—“

“I’m aware, boy. I never do anything I don’t want to do.” Hannibal smiles. “Now, focus. Snacks?”

“Chicken nuggets are a good choice, uh…peanut butter and jelly—preferably apple. I mean, general safe foods for kids?”

Hannibal chuckles softly. “I’ll come up with some things for you. For now, I’ll get your clothes, and I’ll take you home.”

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Hannibal ends up taking Will home much later than originally plans. Will finds every excuse he can to delay being taken home. And Hannibal falls for each one. It nearly confirms his suspects of neglect and abuse. Will asks for something else to eat, and then he offers to help Hannibal make dinner and help clean up afterwards. He helps Hannibal place portions in containers for Will to take home. It's nearly ten p.m, and Will simply does not wish to leave his car.

"Darling boy, you can't stay with me any longer. You must go home."

"I know," Will murmurs, picking up his backpack, heavy with glass dishes full of food. "Thank you again for, ah, making sure I didn't die."

"You're very welcome, Will." Hannibal slides out with Will, going around to his trunk to get out the boy's rinky dink ten speed bike. Hannibal just might buy him a better bike while he's out tomorrow. He walks with Will, pushing his bike along. "Goodnight."

Hannibal muses those soft curls on the boy's head before he turns head to his car. He watched through the passenger window as Will drops his bike near the porch and heads inside slowly. The drive back to his home is short, but for someone on a bike in the middle of summer, it would have seemed like a long journey. He thinks of thinks he can get for Will for a quick morning snack if he's not up and moving when he drops his paper off. Will suggested safe foods for kids. He could work with that. Right?

Wrong.

It turns out safe foods were processed, unhealthy, and overall bad for the body. He looks at the bag of dinosaur shaped chicken nuggets with a rather disgusted look. He reads the ingredients and puts the bag back. He can probably make the boy a better alternative. He checks the vegan option and pointedly decides that yes, he will figure out how to make these nuggets for Will. He buys peanut butter and apple jelly, as Will had requested, eggs. He buys a variety pack of Gatorade and a few other things for himself.

The week drags by terribly slow. He spends most of Saturday figuring out how to make Will's nuggets. He deems himself successful when they hold their shape. He puts them in a freezer bag and sticks them in the freezer. Hannibal cleans up his mess and takes a seat in his living room with a glass of whiskey in hand. The amount of trouble he went through for this boy, he hopes he comes right in tomorrow and rummage through his fridge and pantry for food. After his usual nightcap, he gets ready for bed. He is curious to see what tomorrow will hold.

Chapter 2

Will stands in front of the large front door to Hannibal's home. He is hot, sweaty, he's dehydrated, but not like he was last week. He's dropped all of his papers off, Hannibal's in his hand. He's uneasy as he twists the handle, surprised as the door swings open. Hannibal actually left the door unlocked for him. He smells coffee brewing, which means Hannibal is awake. He closes the door behind him and follows the smell to the kitchen. He drops his backpack near the entryway. Hannibal looks up from his mug, smiles softly at him.

"Good morning, Will," he says, sitting his mug down on the counter. "How are you feeling?"

Will blushes, turns his head down underneath Hannibal's intense gaze. "I'm fine," he says softly. His stomach growls. "I am hungry.."

"Well, you're just in time."

Will goes to the fridge behind Hannibal after dropping his Sunday paper beside him on the island. He had been serious about making sure Will had what he needed to recover. He takes out a blue Gatorade, sitting down in a chair at the island. Hannibal tends to something on the stove— *smells like bacon* . He watches him curiously as he takes down two plates, puts whatever he made on a plate and hands it over to Will. Will pokes at it, sniffs it curiously.

"What is it?" Will asks.

"Egg bites," Hannibal says simply. "Contains bacon, spinach and finely diced zucchini."

"Sounds healthy." Will pops one in his mouth. It's fucking delicious, and he egearly scarfs his second and third.

Hannibal chuckled as he takes his time to enjoy his breakfast. "Did you taste it, dear boy?" he asks.

"Briefly, and it tasted fucking good." He sips his Gatorade. He's cooled down immensely since stepping into Hannibal's home.

Hannibal's looking over him, as if debating something, or looking for something in particular. Will tries to make himself seem as small as possible, as if that would help him hide from this man's piercing eyes. He squirms a bit in his chair, picking up his plate to rinse it. Hannibal turns to watch him as he moves. Will feels a hand on the back of his neck, flinches instinctively.

"What happened here?" he asks, tracing along a bruise Will just couldn't get rid of.

"Er, my friends and I get a little too rough when we wrestle sometimes."

"Is that so?"

Will nods. “Boys being boys, y’know?”

Hannibal looks like he doesn’t believe it for a second, but he lets it go, opting to let Will take the egg bites right out of the pan, which he happily eats, taking his time to enjoy the savory taste.

“So these safe foods you suggested,” Hannibal starts, turning away to dig around his freezer. “Instead of buying those chicken nuggets, I made some.”

“You made me chicken nuggets?”

Hannibal hides his smile behind his coffee mug. “Yes.”

Will rolls his eyes. “You’re not one of those health nuts, are you, Dr. Lecter?”

Hannibal shrugs. “I am a bit particular about what I put in my body.”

Will takes the bag and opens it. He sniffs at it, shrugs. “Smells just like the store bought ones. Looks like ‘em too. Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.”

Will decides to help Hannibal clean up. He washes the dishes while Hannibal puts them up. They fall into easy conversation. Will’s comfortable. He infodumps about fishing, different types of lures and fish that were popular in different regions. Hannibal listens intently, even asks questions. Will is absolutely thrilled that Hannibal is engaging with him. Will talks and talks and talks until the kitchen is cleaned. Now, he’s perched on the island as Hannibal makes him a cup of tea. While his tea steeps, Hannibal pours himself another cup of coffee.

Will just so happens to glance at clock on the stove. He blinks. *Hours* have passed since his arrival. He looks at Hannibal, who tilts his head, amused.

“What is it, Will?” he asks.

“I’ve been sitting here for three hours rambling on about fish. Why didn’t you stop me?” he asks bluntly, sipping his tea now that it is done.

Hannibal brings the tall chair around to the other side and sits. “You were very excited to talk about something you like, and I was very intrigued by your knowledge of fishing.”

Will flushes and looks away. “Yeah, sure you were. No one is ever interested. Truly.”

Hannibal drums on the counter beside him. Will studies the man, watches the tendons move smoothly underneath his skin. Without much thought about it, he reaches out, traces along the veins on the top of his hand, pushing up the sleeve of his robe to continue down to his elbow and back. Hannibal turns his arm over, flexes, and Will mindlessly traces veins from his wrist down to the bend of his arm.

“What do you want to be when you graduate?” Hannibal asks.

“Something in criminology,” he answers. “A profiler, maybe. I tend to read people.”

“What do you read from me?” Hannibal uncurls his hand, turns his arm around to, in turn, trace old scars Will has long since forgotten how he got.

Hannibal’s fingers are gentle on his skin. Will takes in Hannibal’s seemingly docile demeanor, but there’s an edge to him. It’s bristling blood red. Will doesn’t know if his red edges are dangerous for him, but he does know two things:

“You care deeply, and you’re protective of what’s yours.” He looks directly into Hannibal’s eyes, an action he doesn’t do often. “Am I right?”

Hannibal inhales deeply, pulls his hand away to sit up straight in his chair. The corner of his mouth twitches up into a small smile. “Remarkable boy, you are, Will. You will make an excellent profiler one day.”

The praise sinks through Will’s body, absorbs into his bones. It feels so nice to be acknowledged, to be seen. Will slides off the counter. “Thank you, Dr. Lecter. For listening to my pointless rambling, thank you for breakfast, for the sports drink, for making me chicken nuggets. You didn’t have to do any of that for me.”

“You don’t have to keep thanking me for these things, Will. I did it because I wanted to. I wanted to make sure you had sufficient snacks and drinks so you didn’t ends up passing out again. They’re necessities.”

Will looks down at his shoes. This has to be a dream. No way is there someone who is actually looking after him. His dad must have shook him a little too hard last night. He doesn’t know what to do, so he stands there awkwardly. His bag. A distraction. He walks over to it.

“May I have a ride home, please?” he asks.

“Certainly. Allow me to dress for the day, and we shall be on our way.”

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Will most certainly is not expecting Hannibal to look like a fucking model underneath his silk robe. He’s wearing khaki shorts and a plain white v-neck. It hugs around his biceps, clings to his chest.

Oh, what the hell? Will thinks as they head out the door. Hannibal lifts his bike into the trunk of his Bentley. He watches his back muscles move underneath his shirt.

“Come along, Will. I have my own errands to run today as well. I won’t wait for you all day,” Hannibal calls from the driver's side.

Will shakes his head and jogs over to the car to slide in. “What do you have to do today?” Will asks, tilting his head.

“I’ve to pick up a new suit as well as be refitted for a few new ones. I have a gala to attend later this evening.” Hannibal glances over at Will, eyebrow raised. “Why do you ask?”

Will fidgets in his seat, tracing the stitching along the seat. “I was wondering…if I could go with you?”

“You’ll be very bored. I’m not sure you would want to sit around while I’m being fitted.”

Will shrugs. If he’s honest, he doesn’t care. Anywhere Is better than the small one story disaster of a house he shares with his deadbeat father. He’s hoping if he stays out late enough, his father would be passed out and he can just…slip away for his room and be left the hell alone.

“I’ll behave, I promise.”

Hannibal sighs softly. “Alright. If you promise to be a good boy for me, you may stay.” Will blushes lightly, picks at a small hole in his shorts. Hannibal reaches out to grab Will’s jaw, forces him to look in his eyes. ”Promise me you’ll be a good boy, Will.”

Will can’t jerk his head away. He feels his cheeks grow redder underneath the doctor’s observant eyes. He shifts in his seat. “I promise to be a good boy.”

Hannibal is happy with that answer. “Perfect. Take your bike out and set it near the house. Quickly now.”

Will hurriedly gets out to do as he’s told. He leans the bike against the house. He slides back into the car. Hannibal reaches over and muses his hair before they’re on their way. Soft orchestra music plays over the speakers. It’s soothing and runs like background music in Will’s head. He watches out the window, blue eyes chasing each house they pass by. He zones out, dips into that void that is his mind.

He’s an idiot. He should have simply taken his drink and left. This man is a stranger. He can hurt him just as bad, if not worse, than his father. When he analyzed him, he *did* sense something dark about the man, something evil that lies within.

But Hannibal is nice to Will. He made sure he was okay, took excellent care of him while he was debilitated. He allowed Will to take most of the dinner the two of them made home with him. He *listened* to his rambling and *enjoyed* it. Hannibal has given him the attention and time he has never realized he needs. *Remarkable boy* plays over and over in his head.

The shop is relatively small. Hannibal places a hand on the small of Will’s back. Will looks around. The walls are a dark grey, the shelves along the wall made from a light colored wood. Light fixtures curve over each section of shelves. Racks of suit jackets and vests are placed evenly through the sales floor. Copies of rare artwork fill the empty spaces on the walls. Will wanders through the wood framed entryway. The store is open, so Will wanders. He can easily see Hannibal from any given place.

He’s never worn a suit before—not that he has any occasion to wear one to, but that’s beside the point. He looks over all the crisp dress shirt, feels each of the fabric. A few he instantly

pulls his hand away from because *that feels fuckin' terrible! Who wears such rough fabric?!* He stops at a rack of silk vests. He wrinkles his nose. The shiny fabric wasn't something he was into.

Will's shocked with how many different colors there are to choose from. He's only ever seen the traditional black and navy. He finds himself gravitating to the greys. He likes the greys. They're neutral and there's options.

And Hannibal said he'd be bored.

Will wanders around the store until he's seen and touched everything. He makes his way back to Hannibal.

"Almost finished, Will, and then we'll be on our way," Hannibal says.

Will nods, takes a seat. The tailor looks back at Will, then to Hannibal.

"I've not known you to have a child, Dr. Lecter," says the tailor as he jots down a few notes.

Hannibal chuckled. "Yes, well it seems I've rescued a stray pup."

Will's cheeks burn. He turns away to look at the shirts on the wall behind him. Will stares at the shirts for twenty more minutes until he feels a large hand on his back.

"You're still red," Hannibal murmurs as he ushers Will out of the store. "Do you like that nickname, Will?"

Will pulls his shirt over his face once he gets in the car. Hannibal hangs his new suit on the handle in the back. Will peaks from underneath his shirt, sees Hannibal is smirking as he slides into the driver's seat.

"I'm going to take your silence as a 'yes'?"

" 'm not a dog…"

Hannibal outright laughs. Will huffs and crosses his arms.

"If you say so… *pup* ."

Will uncovers his face completely. He sits up a little straighter. "You know, pups require much attention…Not just food, water. Gotta train 'em, discipline 'em."

Hannibal is quiet for a moment. Will worries that he should have kept that to himself. He toys around with his seatbelt, looking out the window. Will contemplates how he could change the subject, to distract the man from his unfiltered words. Really, he wanted to keep it to himself.

Maybe he'll just stick his paper in the mailbox next Sunday and then carry on his way. He can feel the color return to his face, embarrassed he even made the mere suggestion. If anything he's hoping Hannibal was just old enough to let it fly over his head.

“Er, forget I said anything…”

“I won’t.” Will hates how honest Hannibal sounds. “I’ll ponder the idea. If you do me one thing.”

“Considering the fact that I said to forget about it? I probably won’t do it.”

“If that is what you like. But if you change your mind, I’d simply like to know why you don’t want to go home. The truth.”

“And if I lie?” Will prompts.

“You can’t deceive me, Will. I am a psychiatrist. I read people.”

Will sighs softly, but he doesn’t say anything. He ponders the idea himself. It seems like a very bad idea, getting involved in any way, shape, or form with someone older. Especially someone who deals with the mind. Is he aware of the dangers? Yes. Does he care? …Maybe. Will knows he’s a prime candidate to be groomed. His daddy hits him, neglects him. He doesn’t remember the last time he’s received a compliment before Hannibal.

“I’m aware of what grooming is,” he says, propping his elbow on the door and resting his head in his hand. He doesn’t look at Hannibal, but he could see his reflection in the window. “No matter how you look at it, it’s grooming.”

“Are you aware of the consequences?” Hannibal replies simply.

“Yes.” Will finally looks at Hannibal. “I could be fucked up worse than what I already am, and, unless you know how to defend yourself, you wouldn’t survive prison.”

They’re silent again. There’s something weighing heavy on them. Will’s not sure if it’s the weight of uncertainty, the weight of Will’s trauma, or Will’s need for praise and affection. They’ve finally made it to the grocery store after what feels like hours to Will. Hannibal parks further out. He doesn’t switch off, doesn’t get out. He simply waits. He might as well tell the truth. If Hannibal is people reader like he says, then he probably already knows.

“Mama left when I was six. Daddy never pays attention to me until he’s drunk. He grabs me by the neck, shakes me, yells at me, stresses me until I seize.”

Tears form and he quickly and furiously wipes his eyes. He doesn’t talk about it—he hates bringing it up. He stares out the window. He sees nothing. Panic builds within, because he’s going to have to go home eventually.

A heavy hand rests on his head, pulling him out of his thoughts. Fingers stroke his check, along his jaw. His chin is held gently between forefinger and thumb. He’s forced to look into hazel eyes, soft with sympathy.

“Darling boy, do not fret. I will care for you. I give you my word.” Hannibal wipes away a lone tear that falls. “My doors will always be open for you.”

“Thank you,” Will whispers.

Will is happy to sit in silence, to simply enjoy a touch that, for once, is gentle. After a few moments, Will collects himself, wiping his eyes and then his nose.

“I’m okay. I’m ready.”

Hannibal scratches Will’s scalp, and he melts at the feeling. “Let’s get started, then.”

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

There's a lot more people than Will was expecting at this gala and he looks horribly out of place next to Hannibal. After the big shopping trip, and the groceries got put away, he and Hannibal had gone back out, found him a suit that more or less fit him. Hannibal promised to get him a tailored suit for the next event as he hems up the slacks and sleeves the best he could.

This might as well have been a red carpet event. Hannibal stands in front of Will. There are photographers everywhere, and he was no doubt protecting him from having his picture taken as much as he possible can.

"Are you ready, pup?" Hannibal asks, glancing back at him.

Will nods, tries to block out the sounds of the cameras clicking, the murmurs that, combines, overwhelmed his senses. He follows Hannibal down the aisle, glancing back as their car was driven away by the valet. Will holds on to the end of Hannibal's suit jacket as they weave between guests. The aisle, or rather, the massive driveway, lead up to the grand porch, made of what looked to be marble. It is so shiny that he could see his terrified reflection as they make their way up. This place is massive—it's like a palace for nobility. Its whitewashed brick exterior stand stall, lit by several outdoor lights on either side of the six large windows, three on either side of the large double door, painted black to stand out against the white exterior. Through the large windows, Will can see the main area and the people who crowd it. His grip tightens on Hannibal's jacket.

Hannibal rests a hand on his lower back, guiding him through the sea of people until there's a break in the center of the room. Will doesn't step away from Hannibal, instead, he steps closer, practically hanging off of him.

"There's a ton more people than I initially thought…" Will says softly.

Will has never been a 'people' person, and he feels overwhelmed by the large number. Hannibal now takes his hand, guides him away from the loud murmurs around him. The next room is not as big, not as full, not as loud. It gives Will a moment to process his surrounding.

"Don't worry. I will guide you. Trust that I will."

Will doesn't say anything, but Hannibal understands his silent agreement. He takes Will back to the main room, where Hannibal easily begins to converse with others. Will stands like a lost puppy at his side. He knows no one, his suit doesn't fit as well as the others, and he's too socially awkward to blend in. Hannibal keeps a hand on him, though, no matter who he speaks to, where they drifted off in the room. The heavy hand keeps him grounded.
He's to be seen, not heard, unless spoken to directly. Will remembers this, staying quiet by

his side. He looks around to see if there's anything of interest to him so that, just maybe, he finds something that entertains him.

"Will, would you hunt down two glass of champagne for me?"

It snaps Will out of his head. He turns bright blue eyes up to his handler, nods once. "Yes, Sir," he responds. He lets go of Hannibal, leaves the safe little bubble he has been in. Champagne isn't hard to find. He circles in front of one of the waiters and politely asks for two glasses. He's given a look as Will explains that it is indeed for two adults, but he lets him have two. Will carefully weaves in and out of the sea of people, back to his person.

Hannibal takes them from Will, hands one flute to who he had been talking to. "Good boy, thank you."

The praise feels nice, and Will relaxes just a bit, hooks a finger around Hannibal's belt loop. With Hannibal so close, he doesn't feel as though the room will drown him, but he worries. People glance at him, look him up and down as they pass. What are they thinking, with him hanging off of Hannibal like this? Do they know? Do they think he is his shy child? Should he be worried. Hannibal reaches back, gently squeezes his wrist with reassurance. Will closes his eyes, takes a deep breath.

*In that moment, he lets the pendulum in his mind swing, how for a while, it has time slow down while he perceives the events around him, the adults in the room have their own circles of socialites, a drink in hand as they catch up, some are talking getting themselves a new property, some are tuning into local gossip.

And he realised, then and there where he stood. No one was looking his way, no one minds him, no gossip or curious gazes. And if there was one gaze that was, it was one that matters, the only one that does. He breathes, and time is moving forward again.

He gently tugs on Hannibal's jacket sleeve, and he waits patiently for him to finish his sentence. Will's a little afraid he'll be in trouble for interrupting, but when he looks up, he's met with a gentle look and a slight head tilt.

"May I roam? Please?"

"No longer afraid of the crowd, pup?" Hannibal asks, amused.

"No, sir. No one is looking at me, no one notices me. I'm okay."

Hannibal nods off to the side. "Don't go too far."

Will twists his wrist out of Hannibal's hand, brushing his fingers along the palm of his hand lightly before leaves in search of something entertaining.

As he scanned the room, will gravitated to a space where he noticed something that would and should be a centerpiece and yet it blended in with everything well enough that it wasn't the spotlight of the room, a grand piano by the window.

Will went to it and slowly touched the lid, amazed at how well kept it is, not dusty, thus something of regular use. It has him wondering if.. if he could get away with playing.

He gets closer to the seat and settles down before scanning the room, even if it was wide, the piano hid him quite well, it wouldn't make him the center of attention. Carefully adjusting the seat and lifting the lid, he pressed a key and listened to the note before grinning it was also well tuned with how it softly rang through the room.

Biting his lower lip he proceeds to play simple notes before starting up a whole song that would be familiar enough albeit the complexity. He doesn't strike the keys with much force, plays softly to entertain himself mainly. He feels at ease. He's lost in his own world.

It's not until he plays the last chord that he realizes people have been listening. He's startled when suddenly a large crowd that had gathered around began to applaud. He looks up, and the first set of eyes he meets is Hannibal's lit up with unhidden pride as he claps along. Will flushes and looks away. He quiets the crowd by dipping back into his head, let's his fingers dance across the smooth keys as he plays something different, allows himself to play with more emotion, a little louder. He's vaguely aware that Hannibal has come to sit beside him. He plays harmony with him.

Will has never been happier to play with someone. He leans his head against Hannibal's arm as they play. After they finish, Will's curiosity is sated. They go back to mingling.

"Talented young boy you've brought with you."

"Yes. My boy is quite talented. Recently adopted, I've yet to know he could play piano."

Will becomes the topic of conversation, but none are negative. In fact, it is high praise that he receives. Hannibal pets him and Will is loving the positive attention.

It's 10:30pm when Will starts to yawn and lean in more to Hannibal. He's got school tomorrow, and his social meter is low. When Hannibal finally breaks away from his conversation, Will tugs on his jacket sleeve.

"Dr. Lecter, can we leave now?" he asks softly, looking up with his bright blue, tired eyes. He uses Hannibal's title to hopefully convey how serious his request is without making himself seem like a brat. "I have school tomorrow."

Hannibal glances at his watch, but it's obvious his decision had already been made. "Of course, Will. Change into your regular clothes in the car, yes? I'll take you home."

Will nods, Hannibal taking his wrist as he guides Will through the sea of people back to the entrance. Outside, they wait for Hannibal's Bentley to be brought around. Hannibal's hand slips down from his wrist, to hold his hand while they wait. Once inside the car and the doors lock, he relaxes. He releases a long, soft sigh of relief.

"You were a very good boy today," Hannibal praises as Will started to undress.

Will flushes as he strips. He feels Hannibal's eyes on him. "Creepy old man…" Will murmurs as he opens his dress shirt.

"You belong to me now, Will." The I can look if I wish was implied.

"Funny, I don't see your name anywhere," Will teases, but his little bit of brattiness was met with a heavy hand on his thigh. Will pulls his jeans on and waves his hand away. "You're supposed to be taking me home."

Hannibal chuckles and Will smiles. Despite feeling drained from, he had a nice time. Dressed in his normal clothes, he leans the seat back and informs Hannibal he's napping. He's in a light sleep, vaguely hearing the soft instrumentals playing in the background.

"You did extraordinarily well, Will," Hannibal murmurs. Will feels a hand on his head, thumb stroking his forehead. "I will invest in a good suit that properly fits you, and I do very much look forward to bringing you to the next social event."

The car comes to a stop some time later. Will hears the gearshift lock into place, but he doesn't want to move. Hannibal's got a hand on his thigh, and he feels content. Hannibal's seatbelt is unbuckled, the seat creaking as he shifts. Lips brush against his forehead. Hannibal whispers that he's home, but Will doesn't move. His handler sighs softly. The seat creaks, the door opens, closes. And then his door is opened, his seatbelt unbuckled, and he's lifted out of the car and put on his feet, forcing him to stand and open his eyes.

"Come, pup. Do you need help through your window?"

"…No, sir," Will murmurs sleepily.

Hannibal presses another kiss to his forehead. "Goodnight, darling boy. Have a good day at school tomorrow."

Hannibal guides him up to the house, and despite Will saying he doesn't need help, he lifts him up anyways. Will rolls onto his bed, turning on his light and waving at Hannibal before he closes his window and curtains. God, he's ready for bed.

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It's near midnight when Hannibal finally sits at his desk with his glass of wine. He works on a drawing he's been working on as he winds down from his day. Will has been good company to bring to the gala. He was pleasantly surprised that Will had such musical talent. It's nice to play with Will. Fun, even. As he draws, he recalls how his boy looked. Uneasy, but trusting. So often he was meet with brilliant blue eyes, nervous when people move into his space.

Will has captured everyone's attention tonight, amazed each and every person that had listened to him play, and they each praised Hannibal for his boy's talent. He is quite proud of Will. He tolerated the crowd much longer than he thought he would. He listened very well. A good boy, he is, and Hannibal will make sure to reward him properly. With what, he's not entirely sure yet. But he has a week to think about. For now, he sits his pencil down and makes his way upstairs to get ready for bed. He takes everything out of his pockets and puts

them in their respective places. He tilts his head when he notices a message on his screen from Will.

Goodnight.

Hannibal smiles. It has been a good night, indeed.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter wouldn’t have been possible without @lil_ravenstag!

Chapter 4

Months have gone by since Hannibal has taken Will under his wing. Only seeing his boy on Sundays, though, just isn't enough. He misses Will. It is only Friday. He still has two more days to go. He taps his pencil on his desk and glanced at his watch. His next patient should be there any minute now. On the corner of his desk is a small jewelry box, a gift for his boy when he sees him. He picks it up and toys with it, listening to its contents rattle as he flips it this way and that before he opens the box. He takes the lid of. Inside is a basic chain dog collar he picked up at the store. Will has eyed it each time they pass it when they go grocery shopping, and he feels as though Will has earned it. Hannibal has put the young pup through so much training. Smart thing, he is. Obedient (when he wants to be) and oh so clever. Proper posture, good manners. He's so proud of Will.

A smile appears across his face just thinking about Will. He can't wait to finally gift him with the collar, temporary for now, until Will earns a more permanent one. The door opens and his patients quietly walks in. Hannibal replaces the lid and sits the box down. He could wait, he could wait…

Hannibal is more annoyed during this session more than anything. His mind is elsewhere instead of where he needs to be. It's frustrating. What's more frustrating is when his cell phone vibrates in his pocket. He presses the powers button through his pants to silence it. A few minutes later, it vibrates again. This time he pulls it out. It's Will.

"I apologize, one moment, please." Hannibal steps away from his seat, answers on the fourth ring. "What is it, dear boy?"

On the other end, Will takes a deep breath. "Are…are you busy, Hannibal?"

Hannibal tilts his head. Will has referred to him as 'Sir' so often, he's forgotten how his name sounds from the boy's lips. "It depends on what you need."

Will sounds frustrated with his answer. "I need a definite answer. Are you busy?"

"Watch your tone, Will. I am busy. What is it that you need?"

"My dad forgot me, or chose not to pick me up, whatever, and I've been standing outside for three hours. I was going to ask if you could come get me so I didn't have to walk home, but you're busy so I'll walk."

Hannibal glances at the patient, who has sprawled across his chaise. "I'll be there shortly, pup. And when I arrive, we will have a conversion about your attitude . Understood?"

There's a pause. "Yes, Sir. Sorry, Sir."

Hannibal hangs up, walks back to his patient. "I'm sorry for the inconvenience, but it seems my boy's guardian has not picked him up from school and I must pick him up."

“Oh, no worries, Dr. Lector, I understand. Should I just reschedule?”

“If you would. My secretary will get you settled. Again, apologize for the inconvenience. Have a nice day.”

Hannibal is thankful for the excuse to leave. He picks the jewelry box up and heads out the door. Why did Will wait until now to call him? Did he make himself seem like he couldn’t be called immediately when needed? A question to ask Will when he picks him up. The school is nearly empt when he pulls around front. Will appears from underneath the overhang, walking with his hands in his pockets and his head down. Will quietly slides into the Bentley and puts his bag on the floor.

“I’m sorry for my attitude over the phone,” Will murmurs. “I was agitated and I took it out on you.”

Hannibal doesn’t respond immediately, simply studies the boy. He doesn’t look up, he doesn’t say anything more, just quietly waits for Hannibal to scold him.

“Is everything okay, Will?” Hannibal asks.

“I’m fine. I just want to go home.”

“I can bring you back to the office—“

“I said I want to go home.”

This is not like Will at all. What could have happened to him between Sunday and Friday? Hannibal answers his own question when he remembers exactly why Will spends so much time with him Sundays. An abusive father. A neglectful one. Hannibal reaches over to brush his curls out out of his face affectionately, but his hand is slapped away and his hood is pulled over his head. Alright. He’d have enough of this poor behavior.

“I’m taking you back to my office. Forget the conversation to be had in the car. This behavior is unacceptable and so unlike you, pup.”

He watches as Will winces and sinks more into his seat. Hannibal pulls away from the school. Will can sit there and sulk for the next twenty minutes. The drive is silent—Hannibal doesn’t bother turning the radio on as he usually does. When they arrive, Hannibal ushers Will out of the car and up to his office. Will stomps in and throws his bag off to the side. Hannibal frowns.

“Will—“

Will climbs the ladder to the library, disappears from sight. Hannibal sighs and sits Will’s bag by his desk. He’ll deal with him shortly. He straightens up things Will brushed against during his tantrum up before he opens his door and allows the next patient in. Will’s collar rattles in his pocket as he sits. It’s sound sits heavy on his mind. Could Will not be ready for such a commitment? His mind is once again drifting off. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees Will, leaning against a bookcase, knees to his chest. He looks up and his boy disappears between

the shelves again. It's like he wants to be close enough to see Hannibal, but he doesn't want Hannibal to see him. What is going on with his pup?

The hour drags on, and Hannibal politely shoos the patient out. He turns in the general direction he last seen his Will.

"Come down, pup," he says firmly. He snaps his fingers twice, a audible signal for Will to come and kneel. He gets no response. "Come down," he repeats a few minutes later.

"Fuck off."

"First of all, you don't swear at me—"

"Fuck. Off."

Hannibal frowns. Now he's annoyed with him. "What's gotten into you?"

Will pokes his head from around the bookshelf. "Wouldn't you like to know?"

"Down here. Now."

Will huffs, but he climbs down the ladder, stomps his way to Hannibal's desk and drops to his knees. Hannibal sits in his chair, and he nudges Will until he's facing him.

"Talk to me. What's going on?"

Will's silent and he looks away. Hannibal grabs his chin to force him to look up, but he yelps and jerks his head away. Hannibal reaches for his chin again with a more gentle touch. Will still winces, but allows Hannibal to turn his head. What he sees cause nothing but pure anger to course through his veins. His fingers twitch, and it's the only sign of anger Hannibal allows to be known.

Will's face is swollen with bruises of various sides and in different states of healing. His left eye is swollen shut, there were cuts along his cheeks. Both of his lips are busted, and his chin looks scraped.

"Did the children at school do this, Will? Or was it your father?" Hannibal asks. He won't forgive Will's behavior, but he will leave punishment for a later time. Will doesn't answer him again. "Darling, answer me. I am quite frustrated with you, but I am also concerned—"

"Don't be," Will spat back. "Just fucking get it over with and tell me what my punishment is so you can leave me alone."

Ah, so that's it, Hannibal thinks to himself. He wants to be punished for something. He reaches down to pick Will up and the pup hits at him, shouts for him to put him down. Hannibal hauls the flailing teen into his lap. He forces Will to lay his head on his shoulder. Will fights tooth and nail to get free until he breaks down. He sobs into his neck, small fingers gripping his shirt tightly. Hannibal strokes his fingers through his hair and lets him sob until he feels a bit better. He encourages him to let it all out.

Hannibal holds Will close. He shakes as he sobs. Slowly, after almost fifteen minute, the sobs fad into soft hiccups. Hannibal pets his soft, short curls. Will starts to calm, his stiff body relaxing in his lap.

“Good boy,” he murmurs softly. “Good boy. Tell Sir who did this to you.”

Will pressed his wet face into Hannibal’s neck. “The kids at school started it…”

“And who finished it?”

Will’s silence is all the answer needs. Every week, his father gets closer and closer to ending up dead. Not even worth the time to harvest. Hannibal rubs Will’s back soothingly.

Will hugs Hannibal. “I-I’m sorry, Sir.”

He sighs heavily. “I know you are, Will. I know you’re sorry. And that’s why I want you to go kneel by chaise, hands behind your head. Time out.”

Will sniffles but he does as he’s told. Hannibal sees that Will knows he’s going to be there for a while. He faces the open window, crosses his ankles and sits. His posture is straight, head up like he knows he should be. He praises Will for his cooperation and good posture.

“We’ll discuss this more when your Time Out is over, understood?”

Will nods. Hannibal’s regularly scheduled day continues. After an hour, Will’s allowed out of time out. He’s more at peace as he sits at Hannibal’s desk to do his homework. Two patients cancelled at the last minute, wrapping up work day faster. He gathers his things while Will finishes up and packs his school supplies away.

Will’s wary as he gets into the car. “Do I have to go home?” he asks Hannibal.

Hannibal wants to tell him ‘no’. He wants to tell him that he can stay with him for the weekend, but that’s not plausible. It’s one thing to be gone most of the day, it’s another to be gone the entire weekend. Hannibal doesn’t answer as he pulls away from the curb. He takes his time taking Will home, stops and gets him something to eat. He given a soft ‘thank you’.

Hannibal waits for Will to tell him what happened. The boy knows what he’s waiting for—he can see it in the ridged way he holds himself in his seat. He tucks his trash into his backpack. In front of Will’s rundown house, Hannibal parks the car. His pocket feels heavy with the weight of Will’s collar. Despite the boy’s behavior towards him today, Will has been a very good boy. He’s gotten quite familiar with his place within Hannibal’s home.

He takes the box out of his pocket, the rattling catching Will’s attention. Hannibal studies the small box for a moment before he decides to follow through and gift Will with his temporary collar.

“What’s that?” Will asked, unbuckling his seatbelt. He leans over and curiously—and carefully— bumps the box with his nose.

Hannibal chuckles softly at the puppy-like behavior. “This is something for you. You’ve proven yourself to a good and obedient pup.” Will’s face falls. “Even good pups have bad days, Will. One bad day doesn’t not affect several very good days.” He scratches behind Will’s ear. Will leans into his hand with a small smile.

Hannibal opens the box, pulls out the silver collar. Will’s eyes light up and shifts to kneel in his seat. Hannibal gently touches Will’s swollen cheek. “You’ve earned it, Will.”

Will ducks his head as Hannibal slips it over his head. The boy is practically vibrating with excitement as sits back in his seat to examine the tag. It’s a blue bone with ‘Pup’ on the front. On the back, it reads Hannibal’s information in case of an emergency. Will tucks it into his shirt, zips his coat up closer to his neck.

“Thank you, Sir. I really am sorry about my behavior today. I just…I got beat up just because. My dad was contacted and then I got hit again because he was interrupted. I was upset and left alone in my head too long while I waited to be picked up…”

Hannibal inhaled deeply. “You feel the weight of the collar, pup? It’s a reminder who you belong to, now, and who you can always trust to call and be there for you. It was supposed to be a Christmas gift, but I was impatient.”

Will leans over to Hannibal, and the man is shocked when he feels Will’s soft, plush pink lips brush against his in a shy kiss. “I really, really appreciate my collar, Sir.”

“You’re welcome, Will.” Hannibal runs his fingers over Will’s neck. “Put ice on your face to help the swelling, darling.”

Will nods as he pulls his hood over his head and gets out the car. Hannibal watches him walk away with a little more pep in his step than when he arrived. It makes Hannibal realize just how much showing genuine care for someone can do. He makes sure Will is in the house before he goes home. He couldn’t wait to spend proper time with him Sunday.

***

Sunday rolls around and Hannibal waits for his battered boy in the kitchen. He’s got Will’s chicken (people) nuggets cooking in the oven. He’s got a glass of chocolate milk waiting as well as a Gatorade. It’s quiet as he sips his coffee. Just as the timer goes off, he hears the door close. Will comes shuffling in, sets Hannibal’s newspaper in the island before he drops his bag and runs around to Hannibal’s side and into his arms.

“Morning, Sir!” he says, all bubbly and happy. Good. As he should be.

Hannibal chuckles and pets Will’s head. “Good morning, Will. What has you so happy this morning.”

“It’s always a good morning when I come to you.”

Oh, how Hannibal’s heart soars. He’s always happy to see his pup. “I’ve got your break—“

“Fuck breakfast, I want cuddles.”

Hannibal lets the boy pull him up the stairs to his bedroom. Usually, he would insist on a shower, but he's got his mind made up. He's planning something, that much Hannibal is sure of. Will's collar clinks as he bounces up the stairs. It's entertaining to let Will pull him around and push him down on the bed, and watch as a nervousness flashes across his eyes. Hannibal tilts his head curiously.

Will wedges himself between Hannibal's legs. He tugs on the robe he's wearing. Hannibal shrugs it off, but then a tug came to his red sweater he is wearing. Hannibal understands the hint, but he wonders exactly where Will is going. Hannibal watches the pup sigh heavily and reach out for the hem of his sweater. Apparently he wasn't moving fast enough for whatever his boy wanted. Will strokes his fingers through Hannibal's chest hair. Will's fascinated with it.

"I thought you wanted cuddles," Hannibal laughs.

Will playfully sticks his tongue out before taking a step back. He tugs off his hoodie and shirt off. He kicks his shoes off at the front of the bed, then his socks, and then his jeans before he climbs into bed. "Come on, old man!"

"Who are you calling old?"

Hannibal rolls over and grabs Will by his thighs and pulls him further down into bed. Will squeaks and laughs. He pulls Will down until he can flop himself on top of his pup, effectively pinning him down while he presses a ridiculous amount of careful kisses all over his face. Will is giggling and playfully hitting and kicking him and trying to push him away, but he knows Will is perfectly happy and content getting attention from him. Hannibal props himself up on his elbows, looks down at his bruised pup with a soft smile.

Will looks up at him like he's the best thing he's ever seen. God, does it make him feel warm inside. Hannibal pulls the blanket over the two of them, tucks Will's head underneath his chin and drapes an arm around him. Will sighs softly, content. Hannibal closes his eyes, snuggles further under the blanket with Will. Will's once again playing with his chest fur. Curled up with his boy, it's soothing. Hannibal doesn't think much of it when Will's free hand wanders over his shoulders and arms, his back and down to his stomach. And then a little lower.

Ah.

Hannibal catches Will's wrist. "No, you don't."

"But--"

"No buts, Will. I'm sorry to ruin any grand plan you had in mind, but this is an absolute no until you're eighteen." Hannibal had morals. Very few, but they were there.

"But I don't want to wait, sir.." Hannibal pulls back to look down at Will. He tips his head up. Blues dart away. It seems Will already knows what he's about to say. And he does. He says it before Hannibal could open his mouth "It's not about what you want, pup, it's about what's best for you. Yeah, yeah, I know...I just...I want..."

Will rolls over and scoots himself away from Hannibal, but Hannibal doesn't let him get very far. He pulls the boy right back against him. Will fit nearly perfectly against him, close to being full body flushed against him. "Tell me what it is that you want, Will. Tell me."

Will plays with the pillowcases, pointedly ignoring what was said. Hannibal slides his hand from his hip around to his stomach and up to his chest. Will squirms in his arms but Hannibal keeps him still.

"I won't tell you a third time, pup. Tell me what you want," he says firmly in his ear. He feels the boy shudder against and his hand leave the pillowcases to rest on top of his hand.

"Sir…" he whines softly. "I want you to touch me. It's not satisfying when I do it. Please? Just once? I pinkie promise to be good and wait after. Please?"

Hannibal sighs softly, nosing the boy's head. How could he say no to that soft voice begging him. He shouldn't be giving in, but he will hold Will up to that promise.

"Alright, Will, but I want you to stay still, no rutting, no rocking. Still. And then once we get you cleaned up, proper cuddles, and cuddles only, yes?"

"Yes sir!"

Hannibal presses kisses along his neck. "Good boy." He feels Will relax against him.

Hannibal lets Will use his arm as a pillow as his free hand strokes over his neck, brushes his collar off to the side. Lightly he thumbs over Will's nipple, drinking in the way Will instinctively arches into the touch before he settles back where he's supposed to be. Hannibal tugs, watches as Will tries to stay put as he was told. He thumbs over tugs, and roll them between his thumb and forefinger, drawing out whimpers and moans from the boy.

"Have you not played with your nipples, Will?" Hannibal asks low in his ear.

"N-no, Sir. Hurts…but in a good way."

Hannibal chuckles softly, only leaving his nipples alone when they are pink and puffy. Will's vibrating in his arms, struggling to stay still like a good boy. He's doing well, and he rewards him by stroking lightly over his clothed cock, hard and wet from Hannibal toying with his nipples.

"Sir…" Will whines.

Hannibal thumbs over the he head, feels the wet spot there grow bigger. Will takes a shaky breath. Hannibal slips his hand into his boxers, palms him lightly.

"Reach into the drawer on your side. There's a bottle of lubricant there. Take it out."

Will does as he's told. Hannibal holds his hand out, and his clever boy pops the cap and squeezes a little too much into his hand, but he'll make it work. He takes him into hand, slowly spreads lube along his shaft. Will's a decent size for his age—average length but thick. He's heavy in his hand as he strokes him. Soft pants come from his boy. Hannibal's

having a little too much fun working him up right to the edge and the stopping before he could reach his release.

Hannibal has to shift himself away from Will, just enough to keep temptation away from his own cock. He knows if Will were to feel him half hard in his pajama pants, he's try to help and God as much as he wants to feel Will's smaller hands wrap around his cock, it's better to keep Will from feeling it. Hannibal praises Will for staying still. The praise goes straight to Will's cock, he can tell. It throbs and leaks even more in his hand.

Will reaches up, threads his fingers in Hannibal's hair. He pulls lightly on the greying strands. Warmth spreads through Hannibal's core, a possessiveness that he has to tamp down firmly. The boy doesn't know what he's doing to him, nor will he know for now. He tightens his hand around Will's cock, jerks him off with purpose. He feels WIll's toes curl against his leg, feels him panting and gasping. The hand in his hair tightens, and Hannibal can't help the growl that rumbles deep within his chest.

"Oh fuck oh fuck oh fuck! Sir, I-I-I—I can't stay still anymore!"

Will's sobbing as his back arches. Hannibal can feel Will fighting every burning fiber in his being not to move. There are small jerks into his hand, especially when he rubs underneath the head with his thumb. Will tries to warn Hannibal of his impending orgasm. His words are slurred together, growing higher in pitch with each, " 'm gonna cum!" He repeats it four times before he comes. Hannibal praises him as he strokes him through his orgasm. He milks the last drop before he pulls his hand away.

"Good boy," Hannibal murmurs, bringing his messy hand up to Will's lips. The boy licks his hand clean.

"Thank you, sir...Thank you so much." Will nuzzles into his hand.

Hannibal chuckles softly. "You're welcome, pup."

"I'm ready for those cuddles now."

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